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PROGRAM News

STATION WASH Radio

DATE June 23, 1982 6:00 P.M.

CITY Washington, D.C.

SUBJECT Signing of New Spy Law

PAT MCMURRAY: The President went to the Central Intelligence Agency today to sign a new law that makes it a crime to publish the name of a spy. The President met first with about 1000 undercover agents inside an auditorium, where reporters were not allowed. Next, the President spoke to about 1500 regular above-ground agency employees. That meeting was outside in the sun.

PRESIDENT RONALD REAGAN: I've come here today to say to you what the vast majority of Americans would say if they had this opportunity to stand here before you. We're grateful to you. We thank you. We're proud of you.

MCMURRAY: The new spy law would punish people who name secret agents with ten years in prison and a stiff fine. But the American Civil Liberties Union says the government should tighten up its own rules instead of cracking down on reporters and editors who reveal the names of agents.

JERRY BERMAN: The government should take major steps to protect the identities of agents. It can do that through classification systems, through better cover arrangements. If you look at the history of this legislation, it's the government itself who put the documents in the public realm from which you could identify these names. It is up to the government to provide better cover. It is not within its ambit to try and stifle free speech in order to accomplish what is a governmental function.

MCMURRAY: Jerry Berman, speaking for the ACLU.

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